



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

### **TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN FEBRUARY 14, 2013**

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#### ***Senate Bill 651 - An Act Concerning Nutrition Standards For Child Care Settings And Early Education Programs.***

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The Department of Public Health (DPH) offers the following information regarding Senate Bill 651.

As indicated in DPH's most recent study on the prevalence of obese and overweight kindergarten children and the DPH Every Smile Counts and Obesity Survey, a total of 29.8% of kindergarteners were obese (13.9%) and overweight (15.9%) Hispanic (22.6%) and non-Hispanic black (18.3%) kindergarteners were significantly more likely to be obese than non-Hispanic White (10.1%) kindergarteners.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Children's Food Environment State Indicator Report, 2011 cites the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and recommends limiting the consumption of added sugar among Americans. The leading source of added sugar among children is sugar-sweetened drinks. CDC suggests that if we address the policy, environment and behavior we can begin to impact childhood obesity in a positive way. The report also states that according to the Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 36% of all children younger than 6 not yet in kindergarten attend child care centers (including family child care homes), but each state is different in the way they may or may not address nutrition in these settings.

This bill would establish Connecticut nutrition standards for child care settings and early education programs which would be in alignment with CDC's Report findings as well as address the DPH survey results of 29.8% of Connecticut's kindergarteners are obese and overweight.

The committee, however, should keep in mind that increasing the regulatory responsibilities of DPH's child care licensing program could create a fiscal impact to the department for additional staff to monitor and follow-up with issues of noncompliance.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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